



## Kidsunlimited Nurseries - Watford

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY336108
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 February 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Tina Kelly
<b>Setting Address</b>	8 Printers Avenue, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD18 7QR
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<b>Registered person</b>	Kidsunlimited Nurseries
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Kidsunlimited in Watford is one of over 50 settings operated by Kidsunlimited Nurseries. This provision opened in 2006. It operates from a purpose built unit situated in a new development on the outskirts of Watford, near to the Croxley Business Park. There is parent and visitor parking near the entrance to the nursery.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 92 children aged from three months to five years. There are currently 72 children on roll. This includes 15 children in receipt of nursery funding. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 until 18:00 all year round excluding bank holidays. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery manager is supported by two childcare co-ordinators who have responsibility as deputy and a team of 17 staff. Of these, four hold Level 3 qualifications and one is working

towards Level 3. Five staff hold Level 2 certificates with five unqualified staff working towards a Level 2 qualification. The nursery receives input from a qualified teacher.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's health is protected as appropriate records and documents are in place. Staff are aware of their individual needs. Children are encouraged to be independent with appropriate support from staff who monitor the children in the cloakroom areas. They learn about good personal hygiene care through their daily routines. A flexible timetable ensures that all children are able to sleep when they need to. The policy for staff and visitors to take off shoes when entering the baby rooms ensures a clean environment for the young children to play. A full-time housekeeper maintains the condition of the nursery to a high standard. This provides the children with a good role model as they learn keep the cloakrooms clean and the playrooms tidy. The under floor heating throughout the nursery ensures children and staff remain warm and comfortable as they take part in the floor play activities.

Children enjoy healthy and freshly cooked meals which are prepared on site by the nursery cook. The menus are monitored to ensure they are free from additives and unnecessary sugar and salt. Provision is made for children with particular dietary requirements and a weaning menu is available for the older babies. Children enjoy their food, they practise good manners as they sit together in social groups at meal and snack times. Staff provide advice and assistance as they support the children to develop their finer manipulative skills. However, the older children are not given many opportunities to develop their independence at meal times. Tables are set with placemats, cutlery and drinks. Meals are served by staff who also clear the tables as the children go off to play. This means that children have little knowledge of how to set tables, to serve or to assist in clearing away.

The outside play area provides children with space and opportunity to practise their physical skills. Children are able to access and enjoy a range of activities throughout the year. They benefit from a large impact absorbent surface area, an artificial grassed area as well as an area set to lawn. The nursery employs outside providers who come into the setting to introduce children to a range of sporting and team experiences. This gives the children ideas that they can develop in their free play. Children enjoy using the ride on toys, they are learning to negotiate and take turns. Children of all ages are able to play, to develop and extend their physical skills, balance and stamina in a secure and well managed environment.

Children are becoming aware of the effect that physical exercise has on their bodies. They explain to their carers that they are getting hot when they have been running. They respond with discussions extending the children's understanding of being healthy and fit.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well maintained and child friendly environment. The site is secure with closed circuit television systems monitoring various areas of the nursery. Procedures are in place to monitor and maintain the building and outside play area. The children's home rooms are organised to enable all children to take part in the planned activities. Comfortable play areas, good quality resources and age appropriate furniture are provided to ensure children's needs are fully met. Children are becoming aware of their own safety as they are reminded of safe practice by staff who explain how accidents may happen if toys are not kept tidy. Children have a growing understanding of the impact of their games on others as they make space for children to join in games or move out of the way.

Children's safety is of high priority, they are cared for by suitable adults who have had the required checks with appropriate training and experience to ensure the well-being of the children in their care. Appropriate procedures and checking systems are in place to ensure the children's safety when they are taken out in the community. Staff are vigilant in their practice and confident in their knowledge of child protection issues as they have covered this important aspect of day care in their training. Parents are not well informed about the nurseries commitment to child protection. A leaflet from the Local Safeguarding Children Board is on display in the foyer but parents are not made aware of the availability of the full child protection policy document.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled within the nursery setting. Staff working with the babies and younger children are developing their planning and records of achievements around the 'Birth to Three matters' framework. Children become engrossed in well presented activities. Staff are good role models as they sit on the floor with the children. Babies and toddler are curious, they move around the playrooms freely, exploring their environment with great confidence. They have opportunities to explore a range of resources. The 'treasure basket' concept provides children with everyday objects that are interesting, stimulating and age appropriate. Young children's communication skills are enhanced with the introduction of the 'Sign with your baby' system. The use of simple hand gestures is shared with parents and can be continued at home. Language development, conversation and songs are an important part of the children's time at the nursery. Children benefit from yoga exercises, they experience relaxing and calming sessions with adults that they are familiar with.

## **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage to extend their understanding of how children learn. Children enjoy a variety of activities that are stimulating and educational. Staff encourage them to explore new experiences, they take into account the children's growing interests and abilities. Children take part in large group sessions as they share information about the weather and plans for the day. They have opportunities for one to one support for more complex tasks

and small group session as they learn to share and to take turns. Planning is satisfactory and is based on the curriculum guidance of the Foundation Stage. However records of children's achievements are not completed in full. Staff are not aware of the children's starting points as there is no assessment on entering the pre-school rooms. Children's achievements are recorded through comprehensive observations but the information is not used to plan for their individual learning and progression.

Children are developing good listening skills, they are becoming aware of familiar stories and characters. They are encouraged to respond and take part in story sessions. Children are confident in making choices and handling books which are readily available. Children access mark making activities on a regular basis as they are planned into the daily routines. Children have limited opportunities to access writing materials freely in their everyday play. They are not learning about the importance of the written or printed word in their day to day activities.

Imaginative play settings are available to children at all times. Resources are not always in place to promote and expand their early learning skills. Mark making items, mathematical thinking and opportunities to enhance their play with the use of technical toys is not fully extended. Children's experiences of making lists, the use of tills, money and telephones in the play shop is not fully promoted. Their understanding of how these items impact on their lives is not being developed.

Children have a growing understanding of the use of mathematical language and concepts. Staff often ask 'how many?', 'lets count' during the planned activities. Children have limited opportunities in everyday experiences to extend their understanding of counting or calculation. Resources are set out for the children. They are not asked to predict how many children may sit at a table or how many plates and pieces of toast are needed for the group as a whole. During cooking sessions they count out loud when asked how many spoonfuls are needed. They are not given opportunities to use the weighing scales or to talk about the difference in the shapes and sizes of the utensils and bowls they use.

Children develop a sound awareness of the wider world. They are taken out to the nearby shops and play area which introduces children to the importance of their local community. Within the nursery garden children learn about the planting and growing of seeds. Children are encouraged to touch and talk about the plants in the sensory herb garden. Leaves and plants are handled to find out about different textures and smells. Children regularly learn about others as they celebrate a range of cultural festivals throughout the year. They are becoming familiar with language, writing, music and stories from other cultures through the planned themes and topics. Bright, interesting displays and artefacts reflecting themed cultures are displayed throughout the nursery building.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued as individuals and all families are welcomed into the setting. Children receive praise and encouragement, they learn what is right and what is unacceptable behaviour. As a result children behave well, they take turns, negotiate in their play and show respect and concern for others.

The nursery has routines and documents in place to help all children reach their full potential and to meet their needs including cultural or special needs. A designated Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) liaises with parents, outside agencies and head office to ensure appropriate support is in place for children with recognised learning difficulties. Strategies are in place to ensure children receive appropriate support with regards to language and disabilities. The nursery is fully accessible to families and children who have limited mobility.

Parents are kept informed about their children's day to day routines and activities with daily update sheets. Some information is displayed in the main foyer. Regular parent evenings are planned to ensure parents are kept fully informed about their children's progress and their achievements within nursery.

The quality of partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. Information outlining daily plans and activities based on the early learning goals is displayed within each pre-school room. Parents are not informed about the nursery education provided or how children learn through the Foundation Stage curriculum. They are not sufficiently informed to enable them to support their children's learning at home.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is being fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's well-being is monitored and maintained as systems are in place to ensure the staff working with the children are suitable to do so. Children's individual needs are recognised and met with appropriate records in place which comply with regulation. A portfolio containing basic information on some of the nurseries policies is available at the entrance to the nursery. Parents are not fully informed with regards to the full range of policies and procedures within the nursery, in particular complaints and child protection. Records with regards to the complaints log are lacking in detail and not readily accessible. Parents are not able to assess the outcomes of complaints with the detail currently held on file to be confident that issues have been dealt with appropriately.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The senior staff receive support from the area care and curriculum manager who visits the nursery to develop and promote professional development for all staff. The process for evaluating and monitoring the provision is being established. There is a strong focus on the personal and developmental achievements of all children. Links are being developed with families to ensure a consistent approach to all aspects of their play and learning.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

This is the first inspection.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

On the 24 November 2006 Ofsted received a concern that there was inadequate supervision which had lead to a child eating playdough and mud in the garden and health and hygiene issues. Ofsted wrote to the provider to ask them to investigate the concerns raised in relation to national standards 3 (care, learning and play), 6 (safety) and 7 (health).

Ofsted received the provider's response which showed that they had investigated the concerns and had already put actions in place to prevent similar incidents occurring. The result of the investigation was that there had been a lack of supervision, organisation and feedback provided to the parent which the provider has now rectified. Ofsted is satisfied with the provider's response and will not be taking any further action, they continue to meet the national standards and remain qualified for registration.

On 8th January 2007 concerns were raised about staffing levels and availability of feedback to parents . These concerns related to National Standard 2 - Organisation, National Standard 3 - Care, learning and play and National Standard 12 - Working in partnership with parents and carers. Ofsted asked the provider to conduct an investigation and report back. A response was received on 26th January 2007. As a result one recommendation was set. The provider remained qualified for registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted

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## **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- promote children's independence with regards to food preparation, serving and tidying away at snack and meal times
- ensure parents are fully informed about the availability of the nursery policy documents regarding child protection concerns and the referral system
- ensure comprehensive detail is recorded in the complaints log and that all documentation is stored appropriately and is available for inspection by the Ofsted inspector at all times

## **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- extend opportunities for mark making, mathematical concepts and technology in all aspects of the children's play and learning including the outside play area
- improve staff's knowledge of the Curriculum Guidance for the foundation stage to improve the quality and consistency of teaching and the children's learning
- develop information for parents to ensure they are fully informed about all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)